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Thirty-five Head Start children received special instruction in various language skills. A control group consisted of 25 Head Start children. The purpose of this study was to determine the effects of this special teacher-developed language readiness curriculum on the grade one reading achievement when compared to the achievement of the control group, which received no special program. The three teachers of the experimental classes attended workshop sessions provided by curriculum experts and received special classroom materials and classroom visits from the experts, who presented relevant demonstrations. All children were administered the Murphy Durrell Reading Readiness Analysis during the beginning and end of the summer Head Start session. They are to be tested again after one semester of first grade. At the time of the writing of this report, that final testing had not been given, but the results of the pretest and posttest from the Head Start session showed the experimental classes to have made greater gains in language skills than the control group. (WD).

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HEAD START EVALUATION AND RESEARCH CENTER

LANGUAGE PROJECT: THE EFFECTS OF A TEACHER DEVELOPED, PRE-SCHOOL LANGUAGE TRAINING PROGRAM ON FIRST GRADE READING ACHIEVEMENT[1]

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Boston University

ABSTRACT

The purpose of the project was to initiate a Teacher-Developed Pre-School Curriculum to Facilitate Grade One Reading Success.

The gap between what many Headstart programs offer and the expectations of public schools receiving the alumni is often great. It was the hypothesis of this project that a community oriented readiness curriculum could be developed utilizing: 1) Community vocabulary and resource, 2) Knowledge of public school materials, vocabulary and expectation, 3) Skills which have a demonstrable effect on early reading success (National Grade One Reading Study).

Testing of experimental and central groups was done at the begining and end of a summer Headstart term. The instrument used was the Murphy-Durrell Reading Readiness Analysis.

The vehicles used to stimulate the teacher developed curriculum were: 1) Workshops for experimental teachers and their aides with specialists in curriculum areas (pre-school language, reading, childrens books, drama and community). 2) Classroom support in the form of materials and demonstration.

The project will be complete when the subjects are tested again in January 1968 in relation to their grade one reading achievement.

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1 "The research reported herein was performed pursuant to a contract with the Office of Economic Opportunity, Executive Office of the President, Washington, D.C., 20506. The opinions expressed herein are those of the author and should not be construed as representing the opinions or policy of any agency of the United States Government."

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HEAD START EVALUATION AND RESEARCH CENTER

THE EFFECTS OF A TEACHER DEVELOPED, PRE-SCHOOL LANGUAGE TRAINING PROGRAM ON FIRST GRADE READING ACHIEVEMENT[1]

Sandra Alexanian

Consultant: Alice Crossly

Boston University

This is a summary of the project to date. Final testing will take place in January of 1968.

The purpose of this study was to determine the effects of a teacher developed language readiness curriculum on the grade one reading achievement of selected groups of children enrolled in a Headstart program.

It was hypothesized that children who receive instruction in various language skills will demonstrate significant gains in Grade one reading achievement when compared to children who do not receive language readiness training.[2] The experimental group consisted of three Headstart classes(N=35), while the control group consisted of two Headstart classes(N=25). All subjects were eligible to enter the first grade in September, 1967. Males and females were equally represented in both experimental and control groups. All classes were part of one funding agency; geographically the subjects were situated in four separate school districts.

The language project, and its rationale was presented to the entire teaching community at a regular in-service meeting. Three teachers volunteered to participate as experimental classroom teachers. The two control classrooms were chosen by the agency program director.

All test subjects were administered the Murphy-Durrell Reading Readiness Analysis[3] by qualified elementary reading personnel. Testing took place the first week of July and the third week of August. The test instrument has five subtests.

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2 National Grade One Reading Study(HEW),@1967.

3 Murphy-Durrell Reading Readiness Analysis, Harcourt, Brace and World, Inc., N.Y., N.Y., @ 1965.

The four sub-tests outlined in the National Grade One Reading Study as predicting grade one reading facility were used.[4] Pre-testing was completed in two days, while post testing took one day to complete.

Two major approaches were utilized with experimental teachers and their aids. Nine, two hour, workshop sessions were held. Teachers and aides were paid, as consultants, to attend each session. With the assistance of six consultants[5] the teachers were encouraged to explore the problems of presenting academic material to pre-schoolers, as well as to examine community experiences and grade one, public school expectations. The differences between preschool experience and public school expectation presented the teachers with the workshop task. The workshop content is described in the agenda (see appendix).

The remainder of the intervention took the form of classroom visits to introduce new materials, both published and unpublished; demonstrations of workshop developed material; a model field trip; and a demonstration of dramatic play techniques.

In illustrating the results (see appendix) the experimental teachers are numbered 1,2 and 3, the control teachers 4 and 5. The implementation of the evolving curriculum was reflected in the individualistic teaching style of each teacher. Teacher #1 was well trained, professionally sophisticated and self assured. Her class was controlled in a good humored manner, and the children were always aware of teacher expectation. She effectively implemented workshop recommendations. Any number of complicated interventions might have been introduced in this setting. Teacher #2 was continually "explaining" classroom behavior in terms of her personal assumptions regarding the effects of home and community influences. Although she was well trained, and maintained a permissive classroom atmosphere, it was difficult to introduce small group activities. Audio-visual materials[6] proved to be very effective with these children and the teacher. Teacher #3 was overly concerned with the mechanics of teaching. The "appearance" of teaching materials was more important than their actual value to the children. These concerns kept the teacher busy making and doing things for the children. The behavior of teachers as a group was characterized by energetic involvement in the project.

The control teachers were also cooperative toward the project. Teacher #4 was seen briefly at the introduction of the testing period and did not remain to observe the test. However, teacher #5, whose population was semi-rural, expressed strong motivation to participate in the workshop, and expressed disappointment when she was not permitted to be an experimental group teacher.

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4 1) Phoneme Test I, initial phoneme sounds
2) Phoneme Test II, initial and final phonemes and diagraphs
3) Capital Letter names
4) Lower Case letter names

5 Dr. Alice Crossly, Mr. Albert Cullum, Dr. Helen Murphy, Mrs. Sandra Alexanian, and Mrs. Mary Brassard all of Boston University, School of Education. Mr. Kiyo Morimoto, Harvard University, Bureau of Study Council. Center assistance to project was Wilma Snowdon.

6 Crossly, Alice, The Evaluation of the Effects of Lantern Slides on Audio-visual Demonstration of Word Elements, 1948.

When implementing a teacher-developed curriculum, you must attempt to account for variations in teacher competance when assessing the effects. This has been expressed by many of the sub-studies in the National Grade One Reading Study. The teacher must believe in and value the content before an intervention can become effective. The method of asking teachers to modify a curriculum to incorporate community characteristics, strengths and deficits leaves the impact and implementation on the shoulders of the teacher. This is in contrast to the introduction of pre-determined curriculum and materials.

Until the final testing[7] takes place in January, when the Headstart alumni is in Grade One, only an informal descriptive analysis of data can be made. At that time a more formal analysis of the effects of a "Teacher-Developed Pre-School Curriculum" can be evaluated. However, upon examining the results of pre and post testing it would appear that the experimental classes have made greater gains than the control classes. If these gains are stable and significant, very likely the experimental classes can look forward to a greater facility in early grade one reading.

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7 Metropolitan Grade One Reading Achievement, Primary I, Harcourt, Brace & World, Inc.

LANGUAGE WORKSHOP FOR HEADSTART TEACHERS

Date	Topic	Staff	Place
	Overview and Orientation	S. Alexanian Dr. Crossley	
	Grade One Expectations 1. Analysis of books for use 2. Analysis of concepts presented	Dr. Crossley	
	Community Resources 1. Real experiences possible 2. Community vocabulary	Dr. Crossley	
	Games and Devices for letter names and sounds	Dr. Helen Murphy	
	Report on the National Grade One Reading Study	S. Alexanian	
	Creative Drama	Dr. Crossley A. Cullum	
	Poems, Stories and Flannel Graph -vocabulary experiences	M. Brassard	
	Vocabulary Lessons Classroom Organization	Dr. Crossley	
	Grade 1 Instructional Vocabulary Working in Community	S. Alexanian Kiyo Morimoto	

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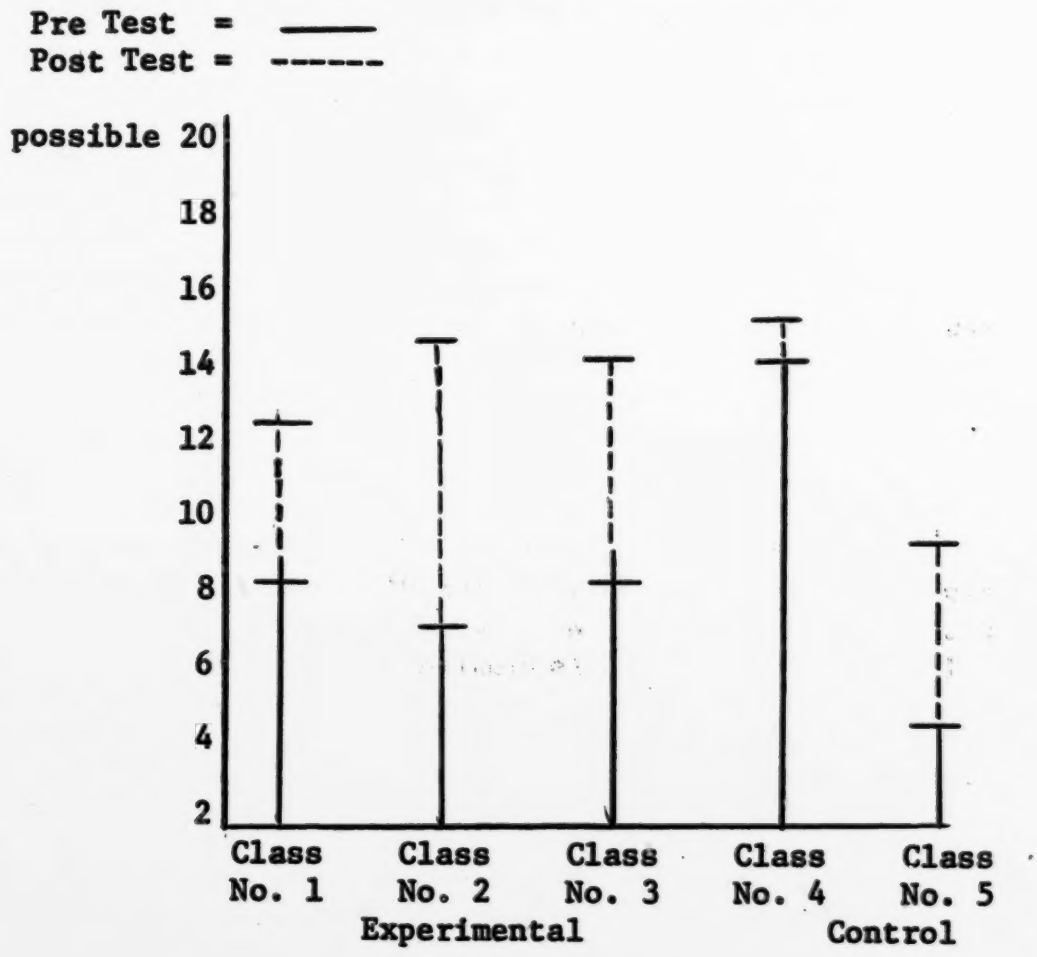
PHONEMES I



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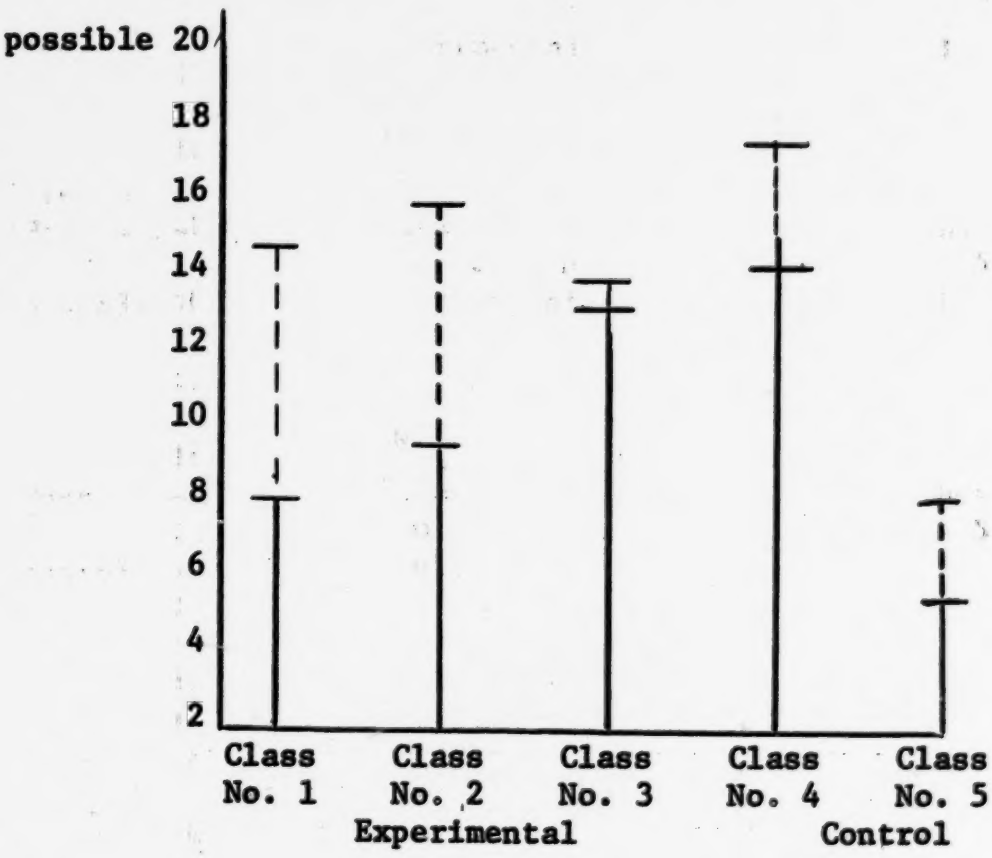
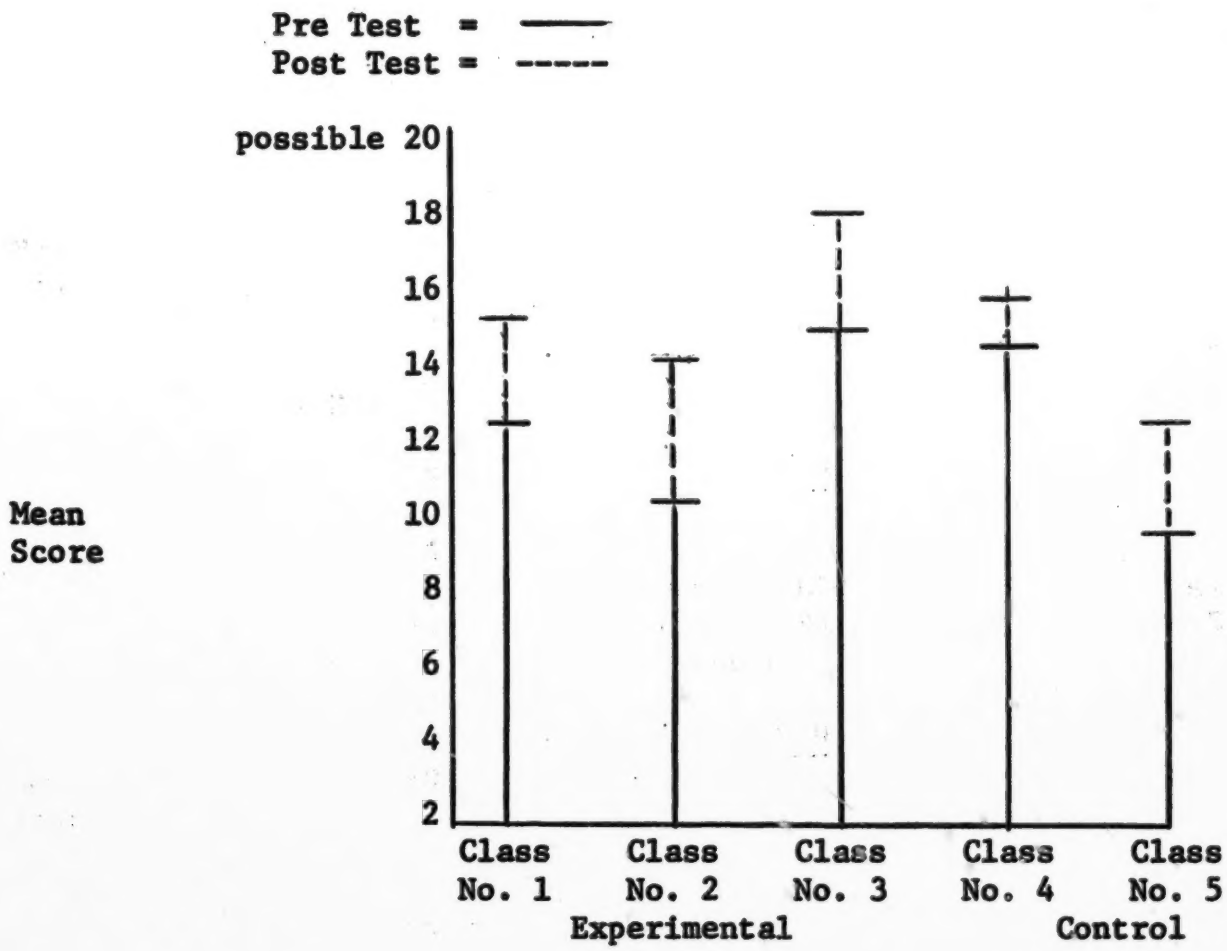


ALPHABET - UPPER CASE



ALPHABET - LOWER CASE